

USS Bataan:

Third Consecutive Ty

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Adhering to operational risk management (ORM), and being the best in safely accomplishing all tasks and missions are why USS *Bataan* (LHD 5) recently garnered its third consecutive Type Commander Safety Award. The ship earned the award in the Large Amphibious category for the period Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2000. *Bataan* also earned the CNO Safety Award for 1999 and recently earned its second consecutive CNO Safety Award.

“We are very lucky to have such a great crew and command climate that puts safety first,” said the ship’s former safety officer, LCdr. J. Hunter Haltom. “We use ORM to allow us greater flexibility in our planning, exercises and missions. This third award is a testimony to the hard work and dedication of the *Bataan* to be the best command on the waterfront.”

LCdr. Haltom, a Texarkana, Texas, native and 12-year Navy veteran who recently transferred to a helo squadron, said he wasn’t surprised when he

*Navy photo by PHAN John Taucher,
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Ship Earns Com Safety Award



learned the ship had won the Safety Award for a third consecutive year. “We have not had a Class A mishap, either on the ground or in the air, since the keel first floated.”

When he heard his ship had earned its third consecutive award, the ship’s skipper, Capt. John B. Strott, said, “Some folks believe it’s better to be lucky than good when it comes to safety. I prefer to think of it as making your own luck. You need to be good when it comes to safety, and I’ve been fortunate that Team *Bataan* has taken its commitment to safety very seriously.

“Part of that effort has been the focus brought to us by an active safety department. If we have a problem, they are all over it to find out why. We get

the answers and make the necessary adjustments to our operations.

“Over the course of the last year, we’ve been in some challenging environments—everything from operating with new aircraft such as the MV-22 Osprey, to the industrial environment of a major restricted availability, to operations in severe weather,” Capt. Strott recalled. “However, the professionals on USS *Bataan* have handled it all in stride. Team *Bataan* completes the necessary training, does the proper planning, weighs the risks involved through ORM, and conducts events safely.

“A key part of every evolution has been the safety brief, which assures that everyone knows what’s going on. That’s really important. If they know



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the plan, the crew gets the job done right. Speed of accomplishment has never been the issue. The issue always has been to be efficient in what we do, to have the right personnel and equipment on station, and to get ready well ahead of the event."

The CO went on to explain that, whenever possible, his Sailors do a walk-through drill to assure things are in order. "We always debrief events to incorporate any lessons learned. We incorporate those lessons into our next brief and 'institutionalize' whatever we've learned," he explained. "We use our training teams whenever possible, and we try to do things smarter. Safety is very much a part of combat readiness."

"As always it is great for the ship and crew to be recognized for their outstanding achievements," said Capt. Martin Allard, *Bataan's* Executive Officer. "Winning the Safety 'S,' coupled with the Battle 'E,' means we can train to fight and win—yet protect our most valuable assets, which are our Sailors and Marines. That is the way true professionals perform, and *Bataan* is blessed with a crew of pros."

Awareness is the key to safety success, according to the XO. "We aboard *Bataan* have a mindset: We put safety first, twenty-four hours a day, three

hundred and sixty-five days a year. We do an in-brief with every new crew member and with every person who rides the ship. During this brief, we mention several things that Sailors, Marines and visitors should know when they come aboard. We let them know it is their responsibility to keep themselves, and others aboard, safe."

Meanwhile, LCdr. Haltom said *Bataan* thinks of safety as a practicality and reality factor. "If it doesn't feel right or look right, then it probably isn't right. ORM is the more formal phraseology.

"We stress safety to our Sailors and Marines and teach them to take their time—to think safety. We want people who are in a hurry to think of what the price might be for taking a shortcut."

Bataan is now authorized to fly the safety pennant for one year, and the ship hopes to also again win the Green "S," which then would be painted onto the ship's superstructure.

"I want to thank the Sailors and Marines of USS *Bataan*," said LCdr. Haltom. "They are the ones who won this award. They have worked very hard to keep the ship a safe place to live and work, not only during exercises and operations—but during every second of every day." ☺

CNO Safety Award Winners

Below are the winners of the Chief of Naval Operations Surface Ship Safety Award for the competitive cycle of January-December 2000.

Category	Winner
Navy-wide	
Submarine Repair Floating Drydock	USS <i>Frank Cable</i> (AS 40), 2nd consecutive CNO award Shippingport (ARDM 4)
Surface Force Atlantic	
Cruiser	USS <i>Anzio</i> (CG 68)
Destroyer	USS <i>Barry</i> (DDG 52)
Frigate	USS <i>Simpson</i> (FFG 56)
Large Amphibious	USS <i>Bataan</i> (LHD 5), 2nd consecutive CNO award
Medium/Small Amphibious	USS <i>Ashland</i> (LSD 48)
Large Combat Logistics	USS <i>Supply</i> (AOE 6)
Support	USS <i>Grapple</i> (ARS 53)
Mine Countermeasures	USS <i>Defender</i> (MCM 2)
Surface Force Pacific	
Cruiser	USS <i>Antietam</i> (CG 54), 3rd consecutive CNO award
Destroyer	USS <i>Fitzgerald</i> (DDG 62)
Frigate	USS <i>Gary</i> (FFG 51)
Large Amphibious	USS <i>Bonhomme Richard</i> (LHD 6), 2nd consecutive CNO award
Medium/Small Amphibious	USS <i>Germantown</i> (LSD 42)
Large Combat Logistics	USS <i>Sacramento</i> (AOE 1), 3rd consecutive CNO award
Special Warfare Command	
Patrol Craft (Pacific)	USS <i>Monsoon</i> (PC 4)
Patrol Craft (Atlantic)	USS <i>Thunderbolt</i> (PC 12), 5th consecutive CNO award

The above ships will receive a plaque and CNO citation, and are authorized to display the green Safety "S" on the bulwark until results of the next competitive cycle are announced.

Also announced were the winners of the annual Chief of Naval Operations Ship-Helicopter Safety Awards for calendar year 2000.

USS *Normandy* (CG 60) LAMPS Operations, **2nd award**
HSL-46, Det. 7 embarked

USS *Supply* (AOE 6), Combat Logistics Force, **2nd award**
HC-6, Det. 5 embarked

USS *Ashland* (LSD 48) Amphibious Air-capable
This is the first year for the helicopter safety
award for amphibious air-capable ships. 🇺🇸